

Message Text

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ACTION DLOS-09

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 ACDA-12 AGRE-00 AID-05
CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00
DOTE-00 EB-08 EPA-01 SOE-02 DOE-15 FMC-01 TRSE-00
H-01 INR-10 INT-05 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
NSF-01 OES-07 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-05 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 /146 W

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R 190844Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0558
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
CINCPAC
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 3220

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PLOS KS
SUBJ: ROK TERRITORIAL WATERS LAW DECREE

REF: SEOUL 3172 (NOTAL)

1. SEOUL PRESS APRIL 18 AND 19 CARRIED SEVERAL ARTICLES
INDICATING GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE CHAIRED BY PRIME MINISTER
CHOE HAD REACHED "FINAL" DECISION ON DECREE IMPLEMENTING LAW
ON 12-MILE TERRITORIAL SEA. STORIES INDICATE DECREE WILL
PROVIDE THREE-MILE LIMIT IN KOREA STRAIT, WITH 12-MILE LIMIT
ELSEWHERE, ALL TO BE EFFECTIVE APRIL 30. SOME PAPERS REPORT
THAT DECISION ON CHEJU STRAIT WILL BE DELAYED UNTIL JUNE, BUT
KOREA TIMES PUBLISHED MAP INDICATING TERRITORIAL SEAS WILL
INCLUDE ENTIRE CHEJU STRAIT AREA.

2. EMBASSY OFFICER SPOKE TO FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL CONCERNED
APRIL 19. OFFICIAL DENIED THAT ANY FINAL DECISION HAD BEEN MADE
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ON ACTUAL DECREE ISSUANCE, ALTHOUGH HE DID CONFIRM THERE
HAD BEEN A COMMITTEE REVIEW AS REPORTED. HE SAID LAW
REQUIRES SOME ACTION BY APRIL 30 BUT STATED IT HAS NOT
YET BEEN DECIDED IF FULL IMPLEMENTATION DECREE, INCLUDING
SPECIFICS OF INNOCENT PASSAGE REGIME, WILL BE ISSUED THIS
MONTH OR NOT. HE CONFIRMED PREVIOUS INTENT TO ESTABLISH
THREE-MILE LIMIT IN KOREA STRAIT, BUT SAID PLAN TO INCLUDE

CHEJU STRAIT IN TERRITORIAL WATERS REMAINS IN EFFECT.

3. COMMENT: JAPANESE EMBASSY OFFICIAL EARLIER IN WEEK HAD REPORTED THEY EXPECT ROKG TO DELAY IMPLEMENTATION OF LAW UNTIL JUNE, TO SEE WHAT ACTION TRANSPIRES ON CONTINENTAL SHELF LEGISLATION. THIS OF COURSE REMAINS A KEY QUESTION IN THE CONTINUING SHUFFLE ON THIS SUBJECT, AND ROK ACTION IS PROBABLY IN RESPONSE TO RECENT DIET MOVES. MAIN POINT AT ISSUE IN THAT CONTEXT, AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, WILL BE HOW MUCH ROK BASE LINES IMPINGE ON JOINT ROK-JAPAN FISHING AREA. HOWEVER, IT MAY ALSO BE THAT ROKG IS CONSIDERING SOME VARYING OPTIONS FOR THE INNOCENT PASSAGE REGIME.
SNEIDER

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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